

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action has been carefully considered. The issues raised are traversed and addressed below with reference to the relevant headings and paragraph numbers appearing under the Detailed Action of the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – 35USC § 103

In response to the new objections raised by the Examiner, the independent claims have been amended to further clarify the distinctions between the claimed system and the prior art.

The claims have been amended to specify that the method includes associating the identity of the conferencing form with a description and causing the conferencing form to be printed by printing the information and the coded data. Similarly the identity of the recipient conferencing form is associated with the description and that a recipient conferencing form is also printed. The claim has also been amended to clarify that versions of the conferencing form are associated with the identity of the respective conferencing form.

A basis for these amendments can be found for example on page 15, line 10 to page 16, line 11 which describes how each netpage instance (of which the conferencing form is one example) is associated with a respective page ID and that a number of netpage instances may be associated with a page description. Further information regarding documents and page descriptions is then provided on page 22 onwards of the specification. In addition to this, a basis for the printing step can be found for example on page 25 onwards which discusses the netpage printer which is capable of printing both the information and the coded data.

Accordingly, the claim now clarifies that each of the conferencing form and the recipient conferencing form utilise a respective identity and are associated with a common page description. The different versions of the forms can then be stored by storing the indicating data associated with the form identity. We respectfully submit that this is not shown by the combination of prior art cited by the Examiner.

In particular, Dymetman describes a system in which coded data substrates are provided by a substrate supplier. Whilst we acknowledge that as a result of this each coded data substrate will be provided with a unique identifier it is also clear from the description of Dymetman and in particular, column 10, lines 10 onwards that the system works by associating a particular coded substrate with a respective webpage. When the coded substrate supplier is to provide the coded substrate to a publisher, the publisher can then associate a digital page description with the webpage which is therefore in turn associated with the coded substrate before the information is printed thereon.

Thus, as identified by the Examiner Dymetman does not describe printing a form including printing both the coded data and the information at the same time. In any event, in Dymetman there is a one to one mapping between a printed form and the corresponding digital page. This is required as a respective webpage is provided associated with each coded substrate and accordingly, a separate digital page is provided corresponding to each substrate.

As a result of this, Dymetman does not describe a process in which an association is created between two different forms, namely the conferencing form and their recipient conferencing

form, and a common page description. We respectfully submit that this is an important distinction.

In particular, the present invention operates by storing a single digital page description which is indicative of the conferencing form. Different versions of the conferencing form are then tracked by maintaining user input values for each page instance as described for example on page 24, line 15.

Thus rather than maintain a one to one mapping between a page description and a form, the present invention maintains a many to one mapping between many forms and a common description, with different versions of the form being maintained by storing user input values. This is now specified in the claim, which states that indicating data (in other words user values) are used to create a first version of the conferencing form and a second version of the conferencing form.

The use of a common page description, and stored user values to track form versions is not disclosed in any of the cited documents, and it will be appreciated that is particularly advantageous as it avoids the need to store a separate page description associated with each form provided. Instead it allows a single page description to be used, with variations between form versions being stored separately, thereby reducing data storage requirements. This also provides an improved mechanism for allowing form versions to be tracked as will be described in more detail below.

In the objections raised by the Examiner, the Examiner has also cited Zdybel as describing that printing of coded data and information may be performed simultaneously. We note that as indicated by the Examiner on page 6 of the Examination Report the disclosure of Zdybel is that the "Machine and human readable information comprised within the paper can be copied and printed by a fax machine". Thus, in this particular instance, the combination of Dymetman and Zdybel describes a system in which a conferencing form may be transferred to a recipient and interacted with, it is important to understand that this conferencing form would be a direct copy of the original conferencing form. Thus, the copy would be of both the information and the coded data. The direct copy will therefore include the same identity and will be associated with the same page description.

As a result, when the recipient interacts with the form of the prior art, they are interacting with the same form as the sender. The computer system of Dymetman only discloses a one to one mapping between a form identity and page description, and in this case, as the recipient's form is copied from the sender's form, the computer system is unable to maintain any distinction between the forms. As a result, the combination of Dymetman and Zdybel does not allow version tracking to be performed.

In particular, the invention as currently claimed requires that each of the conferencing form and the recipient conferencing form have separate identities. This allows the version tracking to be performed and it will be appreciated by the Examiner that the combination of Dymetman and Zdybel discusses using the same page identity and could not therefore define different form versions.

Even in the event that the Examiner further uses the teaching of Horibe as a description of version tracking, we note that this document does not teach any mechanism that would allow version tracking to be implemented using the form defined by the combination of Dymetman and Zdybel.

In particular, in Horibe, the system works by effectively storing each input message as a separate form, as indicated by the fact that each message is provided with a separate message number, as shown for example in Figure 3D. This allows the different "versions" to be tracked.

However, as mentioned above, there is no disclosure in the combined teaching of Dymetman and Zdybel as to how different form identities could be provided for different versions of the form, which instead only describes copying the forms including the coded data.

Even if one were minded to interpret that Dymetman would be used to print new forms to provide version tracking, this would require that each form is associated with a different page description, due to the manner in which Dymetman uniquely associates each coded substrate with a respective page description. Accordingly, even in this case, this would not teach tracking versions of a form by maintaining a common page description and storing user values, such as indicating data, to track the form versions.

In view of this, we respectfully submit that the prior art either alone, or in combination, does not teach a system in which a conferencing form is provided which is associated with a description, but which can include a number of conference form instances, each of which have a respective identity and each of which can result in corresponding versions of the conferencing form which may be generated in a tree of versions as required by the claim.

In the event that the Examiner does not accept these arguments, we have added in new dependent claims 53 to 57 which define further distinctions over the prior art.

In particular, claim 53 relates to the method including causing a version of the conferencing form to be printed using the description and at least one of the indicating data or the recipient indicating data. Thus, as will be appreciated by the Examiner, the printing step utilises the common digital page description with the user values discussed on page 24 to populate the form with versions specific information. This is not taught or suggested by the prior art.

Claim 54 describes determining values from the indicating data and generating the tree of versions by storing the values associated with the identity of the conferencing form. In particular, a basis for this can be found for example on page 24 which talks about maintaining user input values associated with particular page instances as also shown for example in Figure 4. Again, for reasons discussed above we believe that this is shown by the prior art either alone or in combination.

Claim 55 clarifies that the versions of the conferencing form are printed using the values whilst claim 56 specifies that the computer system can receive version data from the sensing device and use this to cause a version of the printing form to be printed. A basis for this can be found for example in the section regarding conference session control on page 76 which discusses a chair person printing a full size copy of the page version by clicking on the thumbnail image. As will be appreciated by the Examiner this will cause the sensing device to generate version data, the version data being simply a specific form of indicating data which refers to a form version, the generation of which is discussed numerous times in the specification.

Finally claim 57 relates to identifying from the version data the identity of the conferencing form or the identity of the recipient conferencing form so that this may be used to select the respective version.

In view of the amendments made to claim and the new dependent claims 53 to 57 corresponding amendments have been made to the remaining independent claims and new dependent claims 58 to 72 added as appropriate

CONCLUSION

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the objections and claim rejections have been successfully traversed and addressed. The amendments do not involve adding any information that was not already disclosed in the specification, and therefore no new matter is added. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the claims 1 to 72, and the application as a whole with these claims, are allowable, and a favourable reconsideration is therefore earnestly solicited.

Very respectfully,

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